



Loch Lynn Heights

Comprehensive Plan

Draft: September 14, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Loch Lynn Heights Mayor and Town Council express their appreciation to the many people, agencies and organizations who assisted in gathering information, ideas and input for this report.

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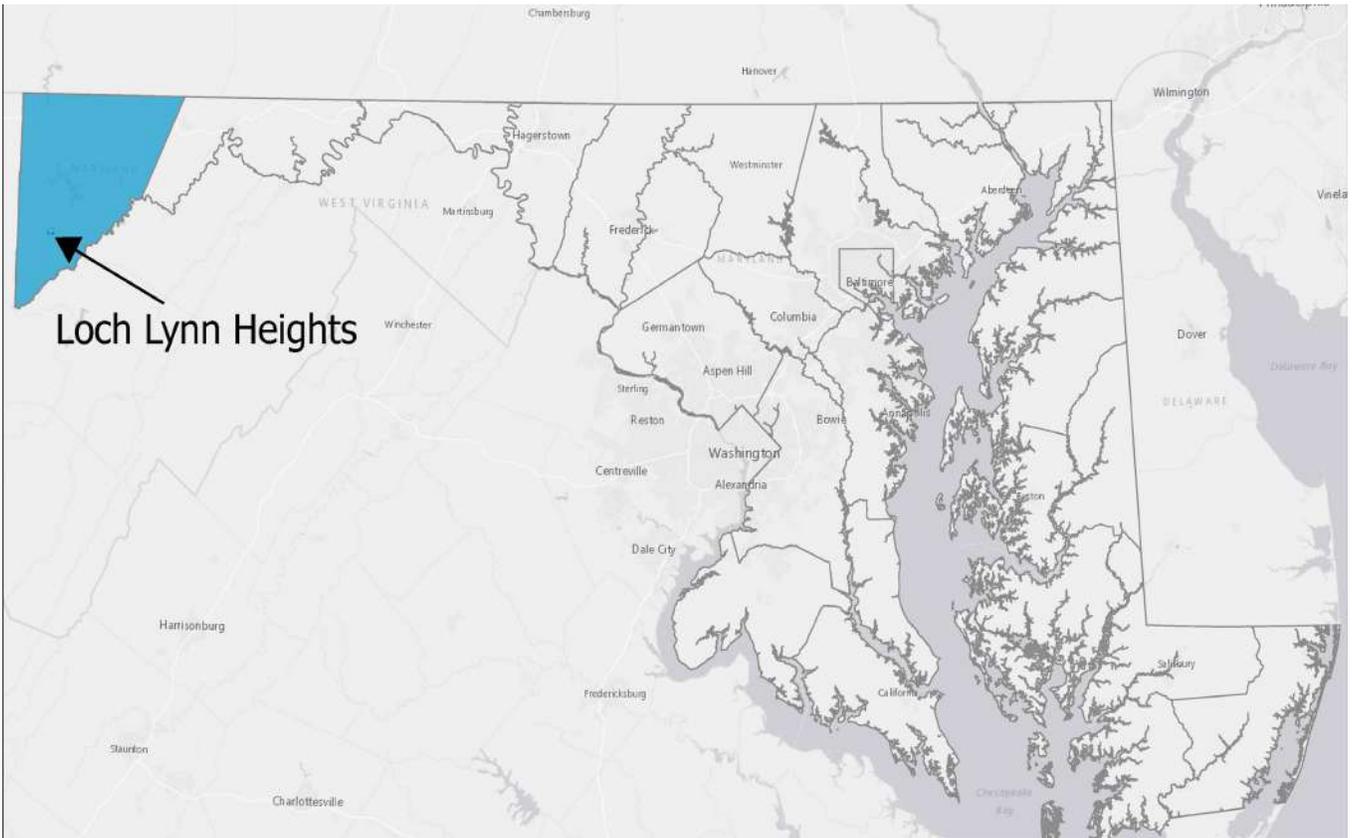
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This section of the document includes the purpose of the plan in regard to the State of Maryland requirements, a summary of the planning process, highlights for each of the plan elements and the plan goals.





Regional Location Map

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

What's all this, anyway?

In short, a comprehensive plan is:

- An educational tool for understanding current conditions, issues and opportunities
- An assessment and prioritization of needs
- A statement of the community's desirable vision of future growth, development and/or preservation
- A public policy guide to decision-making for the governing body.

The Comprehensive Plan examines existing conditions in the community, identifies priority issues as well as assets which helped to determine appropriate action items and recommendations for the Town as it implements the plan.

The document carries forward the solid work done from the 2009 comprehensive plan. Though some conditions have changed since then, the Town's values and priorities remain largely the same. Thus, many themes, goals and objectives from the prior plan are included and updated as appropriate.

Required Procedures for Plan Development

Maryland State law places Planning Commissions at the center of plan development whereby the Planning Commission develops the plan and forwards its recommendation to the legislative body (the Mayor and Council). The State Land Use Article establishes procedural requirements for plan adoption, as well. A draft plan must be submitted to the State and adjacent jurisdictions for review at least sixty (60) days prior to a Planning Commission public hearing. At least one public hearing is required, with notice being placed in the local newspaper of record. This document continues in that tradition and has included engagement with the community, from kick-off to adoption.

Comprehensive Plan Elements

The State of Maryland has required elements that must be included in a comprehensive plan. While there is no designated way these elements must be addressed and chapters are not required to have titles that match the elements. The required elements are:

- Goals and Objectives
- Land Use
- Housing
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Mineral Resources
- Development Regulations
- Area of Critical State Concern
- Sensitive Areas
- Fisheries (not applicable to Loch Lynn)
- Implementation
- Development Capacity Analysis
- Municipal Growth
- Water Resources

Loch Lynn Heights decided to include health information into the plan as well because of its impact on the various elements that comprise the Comprehensive Plan as well as the future sustainability of communities. Information for this topic was gathered through coordination with the Maryland Department of Health and the Garrett County Health Department. Meetings were held with these departments and they provided critical health statistics and information for the plan. Questions regarding health were also added to public outreach efforts through the planning process.

Health statistics as well as information related to specific action items are incorporated into the plan elements where appropriate. This information is designated with the following icon throughout the plan:



Maryland Twelve Planning Visions

In addition to the planning elements, communities in Maryland are required to include the Twelve Planning Visions in their Comprehensive Plans. These visions work in concert with the Comprehensive Plan elements to ensure that ongoing goals to develop and implement sound growth and development policy in Maryland are met.

- **Quality of Life and Sustainability:** Achieve high quality of life through stewardship of land, water and air for sustainable communities and environmental protection.
- **Public Participation:** Ensure citizens are partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives.
- **Growth Areas:** Concentrate growth in existing population and business centers or strategically selected new centers.
- **Community Design:** Encourage compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near transit options to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources while preserving and enhancing natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas and historic, cultural, and archeological resources.
- **Infrastructure:** Ensure growth areas have water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business growth in an orderly and environmentally sensitive manner.
- **Transportation:** Promote a well-maintained, multi-modal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.
- **Housing:** Provide a range of housing options for citizens of all ages and incomes.
- **Economic Development:** Encourage economic development that promotes employment opportunities for all income levels.
- **Environmental Protection:** Manage land and water resources to restore and maintain healthy air/water, natural systems and living resources.
- **Resource Conservation:** Conserve waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems and scenic areas.
- **Stewardship:** Ensure government, businesses and residents collaborate to create sustainable communities to balance efficient growth with resource protection.
- **Implementation:** Integrate strategies, policies, programs and funding for growth and development; resource conservation; infrastructure; and transportation.

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THE PROCESS

Planning is essentially an organized way of thinking about the future. Translating such thinking into action requires an orderly process that generally involves collecting information, identifying issues, setting goals and objectives, formulating possible courses of action, implementing recommendations and then evaluating the implementation to update goals and methods as needed.

The Comprehensive Plan is the vehicle through which this process is initiated and formalized for the guidance of officials and the understanding of the general public. The plan is broad in scope, examining the physical, social and economic characteristics that have made Loch Lynn Heights what it is today while anticipating what conditions will impact the future. It is designed to establish basic policies and to guide future growth and development.

The Loch Lynn Heights Planning Commission directed the planning process, participating in regular work sessions to review progress and provide input on specific plan topics.

The planning process also involved interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders to gather element specific information for the plan. A public survey was developed to gather additional input to guide the plan from the Town's residents. Additionally, plan material was available at the Community Day in September 2022 to encourage residents and others to participate in the planning process.



Project Kick Off
November 2021

Interview
Stakeholders/
Identify Issues
Winter 2021/22



Public Survey
Prioritize Issues
Spring/Summer 2022

Develop
Recommendations
Fall 2022/Winter 2023



Draft Plan /
Adoption
Summer/Fall 2023



Adoption

PLAN GOALS

The following goals were developed for each of the plan elements. These goals were created based on information from Loch Lynn Heights' previous Comprehensive Plan as well as input from the Town. The goals were used as a basis to develop the recommendations in the Action Plan.



Land Use: Loch Lynn will support a development pattern that will conserve natural resources and encourage a balance between various land uses to sustain an overall appealing atmosphere.



Housing: Loch Lynn Heights will encourage housing types that meet the needs of current and future residents while fitting into the Town's existing character.



Transportation: Loch Lynn Heights will support a transportation system that provides safe and effective movement for all users and a variety of modes of transportation.



Community Facilities & Services: Loch Lynn Heights will develop and maintain an adequate level of community facilities to meet existing and future needs of the Town's population.



Mineral Resources: Loch Lynn Heights will ensure that any future mineral extraction does not detract from the quality of life of the Town residents.



Development Regulations: Loch Lynn Heights will update their land use regulations to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.



Areas of Critical State Concern: Loch Lynn Heights will ensure that areas of critical state concern, within their boundaries, are protected from development.



Sensitive Areas: Loch Lynn Heights will protect natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas by directing development and redevelopment toward appropriate areas.



Implementation: Loch Lynn Heights will ensure that land development regulations and review of development applications are efficient and encourage development in appropriate areas.



Development Capacity Analysis: Loch Lynn Heights will ensure that land is available for future development or redevelopment.



Municipal Growth: Loch Lynn Heights will manage future development/redevelopment to ensure Loch Lynn Heights' small town character and charm is maintained.



Water Resources: Loch Lynn Heights will ensure that Town residents have access to clean and reliable water sources.



Chapter 2:

Existing Conditions

This section of the plan includes information on what exists currently for the Town regarding the various plan elements. The data was derived primarily from the existing plan and updated as necessary through stakeholder outreach and online research.



SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

This section summarizes the significant conditions and trends from studying and evaluating eight subject areas. This information was derived from the previous plan and updated with information from the Town and stakeholders as necessary:

LOCATION AND HISTORY

- Location -- Loch Lynn Heights is situated in Garrett County, Maryland, two miles east of Oakland, via MD Route 135.
- History -- Loch Lynn Heights was originally a farm owned by J. C. Alderson, a major in the Confederate Army. It became a resort town in the late 1800's when the B&O Railroad established a station there, but declined as a resort during the early 1900's due to the rapidly growing popularity of the automobile for travel. The natural gas rush which occurred primarily between 1950 and 1953 was the next major event of Loch Lynn's history. However, due to indiscriminate drilling at high density, most wells did not produce enough gas to pay for the cost of their construction. Today the Town is primarily a residential community with a few small support businesses.

NATURAL FEATURES (relates to Mineral Resources, Areas of Critical State Concern and Sensitive Areas plan elements)

- Hydrology -- Loch Lynn Heights is located within the southern portion of the Youghiogheny River Drainage Basin. The Little Youghiogheny River is the major waterway corridor that passes through Loch Lynn Heights and is a designated trout stream. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service sponsored a series of watershed projects within the Little Youghiogheny Drainage Basin in the 1960's.
- Soils -- All of the soils in Loch Lynn Heights and the surrounding area belong to the Calvin-Gilpen- Dekalb Soil "Association". This soil association supports most of the intensive farming in the County and provides very good building sites.
- Topography -- The land in Loch Lynn slopes gradually upward from an elevation of 2,400 feet in the western most part of Town along the Little Youghiogheny River to 2,520 feet above sea level on the hilltop on the northeast part of Town. There is only one small area in the northeast corner with a slope greater than 15%; the remainder is less than 8%.
- Prime Agricultural Land-- Approximately 12 acres of prime agricultural land exist within the Town boundaries.

- Mineral Resources--Natural gas is found in the Loch Lynn Heights gas field at a depth averaging 3/4 of a mile. The field is 7½ miles long and 1/2 - 3/4 miles wide. Loch Lynn Heights is at the northeastern end of the field. A total of 12 wells have been drilled over the years in Loch Lynn Heights although only eight of them produced gas.
- Streams and Buffers--The Little Youghiogheny River and one of its major tributaries (an unnamed tributary east of the Town) flow through and near Loch Lynn Heights. These waterways and the land adjoining them are valuable and sensitive resources.
- 100-Year Floodplains--100-year floodplains exist along the Little Youghiogheny River, and the unnamed tributary of the Little Youghiogheny River.
- Habitats of Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species--No sites of rare, threatened or endangered species exist within or near Loch Lynn Heights according to State and Federal inventories.
- Steep Slopes--The vast majority of steep slopes in the Loch Lynn Heights vicinity occur to the east along the Backbone Mountain and its foothills (the Little Mountains, Bittering Hill and other areas). These slopes range in steepness from 20- 25% on the hillsides to over 36% along the ridge of the Backbone Mountain.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND LAND USE (relates to Land Use, Housing, Development Regulations, Implementation, Development Capacity Analysis and Municipal Growth plan elements)

- Population Change-- The 2020 population of the Town of Loch Lynn Heights was 493. The Town's population has gone up and down throughout the 1900's. There was an increase in population from 1990 through 2010 with a decrease from 2010 to 2020.
- Age and Gender--The age groups of youth and young adults decreased the most in population between 2010 and 2020. In 2020, young to middle age adults (ages 20-49) represented the largest age group (49% of the population) while seniors (ages 60+) represented the smallest age group (21%). There were slightly more females than males in 2020. Females comprised 52% of the population in 2020.
- Households-- The total number of households in Loch Lynn Heights decreased from 271 households in 2010 to 187 households according to 2020 estimates.
- Income-- Loch Lynn Heights' median annual household income (\$25,234 in 2010) increased by 84% according to 2019 estimates. The Town's income levels were similar to that of Garrett County (\$52,617 median household income) and considerably lower than the overall income levels for Maryland (\$86,738 median household income) in 2019.

- Housing—Loch Lynn Heights contained an estimated 206 housing units in 2020, 9.7% of which were vacant. Single family detached homes represented the largest housing type comprising 67% of the total housing units. The median value of an owner-occupied home in Loch Lynn Heights was \$95,900 in 2020 compared to \$194,600 in Garrett County overall.
- The vast majority of Loch Lynn Heights' residents who worked in the labor force (73.3%) were working in the private sector according to 2019 estimates, 13.5% worked in the public sector and the remaining 12.2% were either self-employed or unpaid family workers.
- Loch Lynn Heights is a small family focused community with a primarily residential base. There are a limited number of businesses and commercial activities within the community. The entrance to town and the commercial district is along an active rail line. One of Loch Lynn's greatest assets is the recreational complex adjacent to the town hall.
- Loch Lynn Heights originally enacted a zoning ordinance in 1974. It has been updated and amended several times since its enactment. Planning & Zoning Staff at Garrett County assist with administration of the ordinance.

TRANSPORTATION (relates to Transportation plan element)

- State Highways and Local Roads--Maryland Route 135 is the most important road east from Oakland, and forms a direct link between Oakland and Loch Lynn Heights. The State's ongoing Highway Needs Inventory indicates planned improvements for MD 560... another important State road that passes through Loch Lynn Heights.
- Public Transportation--The Garrett County Community Action Committee provides small transport buses and vans, which are available by request, to the residents of Loch Lynn Heights.
- Passenger Rail Service--While passenger rail service ended in Garrett County in 1971, AMTRAK provides daily service between Washington D.C. and Cumberland, one hour away.
- Freight Rail Service--The main line of the former B&O Railroad (now CSX) runs westward to Parkersburg and crosses Garrett County from Bloomington, through Deer Park, Loch Lynn Heights and Oakland to Hutton at the West Virginia line.
- Air Transportation--Originally, the Garrett County Airport was constructed to encourage public use of the recreation resources in the Deep Creek Lake Area. Today, however, the airport assumes a larger role as the County's economy continues to grow.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES (relates to Community Facilities & Services and Water Resources plan elements)

- Water and Sewerage Systems -- The Garrett County Department of Public Utilities (GCDPU) owns and operates Loch Lynn Heights' public water system which serves all residents and businesses in the Town. The Department of Public Utilities (GCDPU) owns and maintains Loch Lynn Heights' sewage treatment facilities, though the Town's main sewer lines are owned and maintained by the Town. There are three residences in town that are not connected to the public sewer system.
- The Town completed an engineering study in 2005 to reduce the inflow and infiltration found in the sanitary sewers. Funding to correct the inflow and infiltration problems was secured through USDA's Rural Development Office's low interest loan and grant program. Construction commenced in the summer of 2007 and is now completed.
- Emergency Management -- The County Sheriff's Office in Oakland and the Maryland State Police in the McHenry Barracks provide police protection. The volunteer fire departments from Oakland, Deer Park and Gorman provide fire protection. The Southern Garrett County Rescue Squad also provides emergency services to the residents of Loch Lynn Heights.
- Government Facilities -- The Town Hall and Maintenance Building on Bonnie Boulevard, Loch Lynn Community Park (which includes the playground and pavilion on Roanoke Avenue), and the Loch Lynn Recreational Complex and Wetland Trail located adjacent to the Town Hall are the publicly-owned facilities available to the residents of Loch Lynn Heights. In addition, residents of Loch Lynn Heights also have access to the parks and recreation areas that are nearby in Mountain Lake Park.
- Health Services -- The Garrett Regional Medical Center - WVU Medicine in Oakland is the closest significant health facility. In addition, the Garrett County Health Department provides environmental health, mental health and nursing services and Magnolia Urgent and Primary Care recently opened in Loch Lynn Heights.
- Social Services -- The Garrett County Department of Social Services administers a wide variety of social services for the residents of Loch Lynn Heights as well as Garrett County.
- Solid Waste Management -- Weekly trash collection is handled by a private collector who hauls the material to the County landfill.



Natural Resources

(Mineral Resources/Areas of Critical State Concern/ Sensitive Areas)

This section describes natural features in Loch Lynn Heights. This includes climate, hydrology, soils, topography, mineral resources and prime agricultural lands. These unique natural areas are the foundation of Loch Lynn Heights' rich natural heritage, a heritage that has significantly contributed to the quality of life in Loch Lynn Heights. Conserving these unique natural areas is an important objective of this Comprehensive Plan. A map depicting sensitive areas in Loch Lynn Heights can be found at the end of this section.

Climate

Loch Lynn Heights and its surrounding area experience about 50 inches of rainfall per year, occurring during an average of 85 rainy days per year and about 125 inches of snow falls a year. Average minimum and maximum temperatures range from 19- and 32-degrees Fahrenheit, respectively, in January to 55- and 75-degrees Fahrenheit, respectively, in July. Usually there are 150 days annually with below freezing temperatures, and an average growing season of 122 days. Prevailing winds are from the northwest.

Hydrology

Loch Lynn Heights is located within the southern portion of the Youghiogheny River Drainage Basin. The U.S. Soil Conservation service sponsored a series of watershed projects within this basin in the 1960's. The program included construction of one multi-purpose project (Broadford reservoir) and five small flood- control reservoirs (three north of Oakland, one east of Deer Park, and one south of Loch Lynn Heights). Site #5 in the Little Youghiogheny Project - Landons Dam - is located about 2 miles south of Loch Lynn Heights.

The Little Youghiogheny River approximately parallels the northwest Town boundary. It is a designated trout stream and is stocked annually by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fisheries. Sewage has been a major source of pollution in the river which is due, in part, to the somewhat impermeable and/or shallow soils which occur throughout the County. Construction of sewage treatment facilities in the Oakland/Mountain Lake Park and Loch Lynn Heights areas over the past 30-35 years have resulted in improved water quality of the Little Youghiogheny River. Waters from natural springs serve as an important source of water supply for Loch Lynn Heights.

Streams & Buffers

The Little Youghiogheny River flows along the northern portion of the Town, and its unnamed tributary flows along the western boundary. Although these waterways are not used as a source for drinking water, they are a source of recreation as well as a vital habitat for plant communities and wildlife in the area. Equally important to protecting the waterways is to protect their associated buffers. Stream buffers are the blanket of vegetation along the streams banks, which help to shield the bank against erosion and collapse.

100 Year Floodplain

100 Year Floodplains which are subject to extreme flooding, often support important other natural resources and provide natural open space areas for recreation which, when linked and managed properly, can create greenway corridors. Floodplains exist along the Little Youghiogheny River, and the unnamed tributary. The Town of Loch Lynn Heights has adopted Garrett County's floodplain management measures.

Soils

All of the soils in Loch Lynn Heights and surrounding area belong to the Calvin-Gilpin-Dekalb Soil "Association." A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils. This "Association" contains gently sloping to steep, moderately deep, well drained soils formed over red to grey acid shale and sandstone rocks, dominantly non-stony. The area consists mainly of moderately sloping soils with steep areas, but on crests and broad summits the soils are only gently sloping. Most soils in this association provide very good building sites.

Classification by soil association does not give information specific enough for planning purposes, especially when the area in question is a small one. The Soil Conservation Service has made available detailed soils maps for the entire County, indicating the locations of each specific soil type.

Topography

The land in Loch Lynn Heights slopes gradually upward from an elevation of 2,400 feet in the

western most part of Town along the Little Youghiogheny to 2,520 feet above sea level on the hilltop on the northeast part of Town. The majority of the town has slopes less than 8%, which is conducive for development.

Prime Agricultural Land

The United States Department of Agriculture defines Prime Agricultural Land as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oil seed crops. As mentioned earlier, the Town has approximately 12 acres of prime agricultural land within its boundaries, which is part of the larger Mattingly Farm. Preserved farms adjacent to the Town prevent annexation into these areas.

Habitats of Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

These habitats are natural areas that have certain characteristics, which are essential to the long term survival of rare, threatened or endangered species. According to State and Federal inventories, no sites of rare, threatened or endangered species exist within or near Loch Lynn Heights at this time.

Steep Slopes

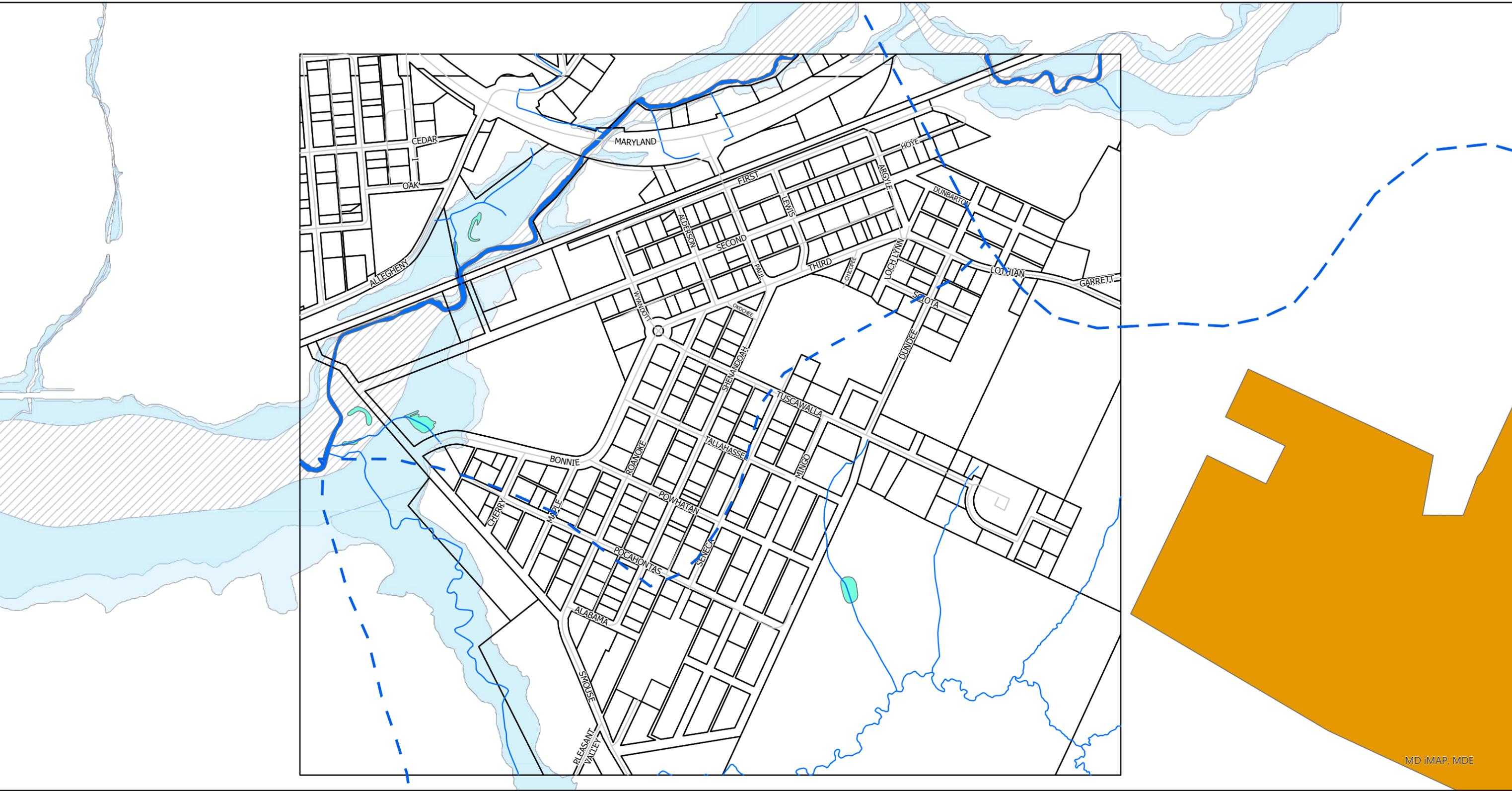
Steep slopes are inherently unstable natural land forms. When disturbed, they are highly susceptible to accelerated soil erosion - a characteristic that underscores the importance of protecting these slopes. The vast majority of steep slopes in the Loch Lynn Heights vicinity occur to the east along the Backbone Mountain and its foothills (the Little Mountains, Bittering Hill and other areas). These slopes range in steepness from 20-25% on the hillsides to over 36% along the ridge of the Backbone Mountain.

Mineral Resources

Loch Lynn Heights is at the northeastern end of the Mountain Lake Park field, where natural gas is found at a depth averaging 3/4 of a mile. A total of 12 gas wells were drilled within the Town boundaries, although only eight actually produced gas. The average spacing of nine wells per acre helps to explain their limited productivity. All wells within Loch Lynn Heights are presently abandoned.

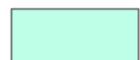
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Sensitive Areas



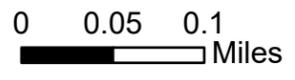
MD IMAP, MDE

Effective FEMA Floodplain

-  100 Year Floodplain (1% Chance)
-  500 Year Floodplain (0.2% Chance)

-  Floodway (1% Chance)
-  Rivers
-  Lakes/Ponds

-  Streams
-  Watershed Boundary
-  Agricultural Protected Lands



Loch Lynn Heights, Maryland

Date 3/2/2023

Source: Garrett County Planning Department



Transportation

State Highways & Local Roads

The Town has approximately 6.9 miles of paved streets (6.4 municipal and .45 state). Maryland Route 135 is the most important road traveling from the east, and forms a direct link between Oakland and Loch Lynn Heights. According to the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), the average annual daily traffic along this section of road was 8,904 in 2021. SHA's ongoing Highway Needs Inventory indicated that there is a \$31,400 multi-lane reconstruct project on MD 135 from US 219 to MD 560 at this time, but it is not priority.

Public Transit

Garrett County is unique in the State of Maryland in that many county-based human service programs are consolidated under the Garrett County Community Action Committee (GCCAC). Garrett Transit Service (GTS), People Movers, provides general public transportation services throughout the county. GTS provides service Monday through Friday, from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on an as-needed basis. GTS has a fleet of 25 vehicles ranging in size from vans to buses with a capacity of up to 18 passengers.

Rail Service

The closest passenger rail service to the Town is the Amtrak train that runs from Washington D.C. to Chicago with a stop in Cumberland, Maryland. Freight service is provided by the CSX mainline between Cumberland and Grafton, West Virginia. The rail line's 60-foot right-of-way serves as Loch Lynn Heights' northern boundary and creates a physical border between the Town and Mountain Lake Park. This line is heavily traveled by freight trains and accommodates local freight traffic serving industrial and commercial facilities in the County.

Air Transportation

The Garrett County Airport is a general aviation airport that serves private charters. The airport has a 15,000-foot runway with 24 T-hangers, 8 corporate hangers and a parking lot. The airport's most recent Master Plan was done in 2015. Upcoming projects include removing hills for more access to corporate hangers and a taxi ramp to the industrial park.



Community Facilities

(Community Facilities & Services and Water Resources)

Water Supply

The Mountain Lake Park & Loch Lynn Heights (MLP/LLH) water system serves 1,044 residential and commercial customers in both communities. Because of the age and mix material, the MLP/LLH water distribution system has been plagued with significant water loss and dirty water complaints. Garrett County has reduced water loss from 45% to near 30% by working with Maryland Rural Water and the purchase of leak detection equipment. In the past several years, an interconnection between MLP/LLH and the Oakland water system has been used to maintain water service to customers during periods when loss overcomes capacity. In 2017, Garrett County was awarded a grant for the completion of a preliminary engineering and environmental report for the rehabilitation of the system. The report was completed in January of 2019. A total distribution system replacement is the preferred alternative with a phased approach. The first phase would be conducting a hydraulic analysis and the full engineering design of a new water distribution system. Due to limited growth in the Town, the current system is sufficient for future needs at this time.

Sewerage

The Trout Run wastewater treatment plant, owned and operated by Garrett County serves Loch Lynn Heights. The Town owns and maintains collector lines within town limits. In 2015 the Maryland Department of the Environment announced that grant funding would be available to upgrade the facility. In 2016, the County and the Town of Oakland elected to evaluate the feasibility of combining their two facilities. A decision was made to combine the systems with the facility located in Oakland, and this combined facility is in the design phase. Due to limited growth in the Town, the current system is sufficient for future needs at this time. However, the Town will work cooperatively with Garrett County to maintain and modernize the system, implement efficient practices, and ensure its optimal functioning for the community and the environment.

Public Safety

Police Protection: The County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) and the Maryland State Police provide protection for Loch Lynn Heights. Given the proximity of the GCSO to the Town, 90% of all calls are handled by GCSO. The GCSO has 84 staff including deputies, the Sheriff, correctional officers, communication officers, animal control officers, resource officers, criminal investigators and narcotics investigators. The GCSO also has civilian employees along with K-9 drug detection dogs. There is one jail facility located in downtown Oakland.



The sale and use of controlled dangerous substances has increased throughout the County and within Loch Lynn Heights. The Sheriff's Office is willing to work with the Town with respect to drug intervention and any other specific projects/problems. Currently, deputies are mandated to patrol the Town a certain number of hours per month.

Emergency Management: Garrett County Public Safety and Emergency Management oversees the 9-1-1/Communications Center, which is responsible for receiving and disseminating all emergency calls for assistance to residents of Garrett County, including its municipalities, on a 24- hour basis. All 9-1-1 call-takers are trained to provide Emergency Medical dispatch instructions to callers as needed and appropriate. Emergency Management also maintains a planning division that is responsible for development and maintenance of various plans and guidance, including the County Emergency Operations Plan, Hazard Mitigation, Hazardous Materials Response, Continuity of Government, etc.

Fire Protection: The Oakland Volunteer Fire Department provides fire response to the Town. Mutual Aid is provided by all other departments within Garrett County as well. The departments are funded through local and State tax initiatives and private and public fund raising. A centrally located air cascade unit is provided as a support unit for all fire companies in the County.

Rescue Squads: The Southern Garrett County Rescue Squad, located in Oakland, is one of two dedicated rescue squads located in Garrett County, and provides service to Loch Lynn Heights. The Southern Rescue Squad consists of 50 members, 3 emergency vehicles, and 1 emergency medic truck which provides 24 hours, 7 days a week coverage for the County's emergency needs. Patients are transported to Garrett Regional Medical Center or flown by helicopter to UPMC Western Maryland in neighboring Allegany County or WVU in Morgantown. Both rescue squads are funded primarily from alcohol and tobacco revenues along with private donations and fund raisers.

Government/Community Facilities

Municipal Buildings: The Town Hall Building which is located along Bonnie Boulevard serves as the Town Hall and Municipal Maintenance Garage for Loch Lynn Heights. The building provides space for the Town office, a meeting room and a garage.

Parks & Recreation: The Town of Loch Lynn Heights purchased three parcels of land through Program Open Space (POS) funding in August 1997. Additional funding from POS assisted with the development of athletic fields for softball and soccer for the youth and their families of Loch Lynn Heights as well as those from the surrounding areas (more than 600 youth participated in the soccer league in 2022). LED field lighting, installed in 2022 with grant funding allows for evening play. The complex also has an approximate one-half mile walking trail encircling the fields with three sets of steps and an ADA ramp. Park benches, picnic tables, a fence, additional lighting and a new lighted flagpole and plaque were also added. More recently, a 1.2 mile gravel and boardwalk trail through the adjacent wetlands was constructed. The trail is very well used and allows for residents and visitors to observe plants and animals specific to these unique wetland surroundings from two observation decks. Signage provides historical information as well as identifies native trees, flowers, birds and wildlife.

The former Loch Lynn Elementary School was given to the Town and was used as a community center. The Town used CDBG funds in 2013 to demolish the building after asbestos was removed. Therefore, there is currently a need for an indoor community space within the Town.

Adjoining the location of the former school is a one acre playground with equipment to accommodate town children two to five years of age and another play area for children five to twelve years of age, as well as a basketball court. A pavilion with nearby restrooms and grills is also available to residents as well as the general public.

In addition to the recreation facilities at the Athletic Complex and the playground, residents of Loch Lynn Heights also have access to two parks, walking trails and the tennis courts in Mountain Lake Park.

Broadford Reservoir, in Broadford Park, is located less than three miles away from Loch Lynn Heights and provides both passive and active recreational opportunities for residents. In addition to the many water related activities such as swimming and boating, the land adjoining the reservoir contains walking and biking trails, multiple ball fields with bleachers, backstops, dugouts, fencing and a playground.

A map depicting the location of local and regional park facilities can be found on the next page.

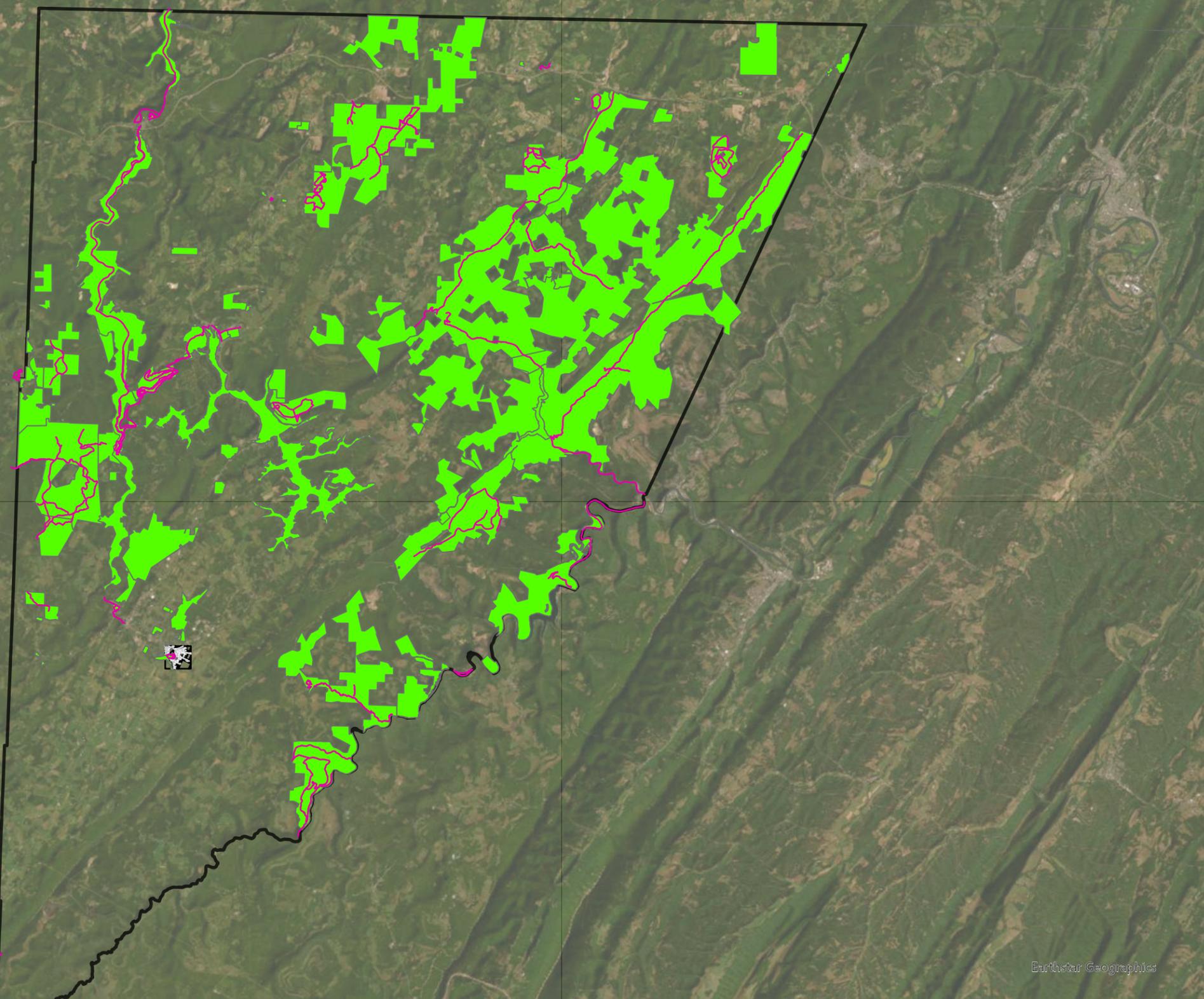
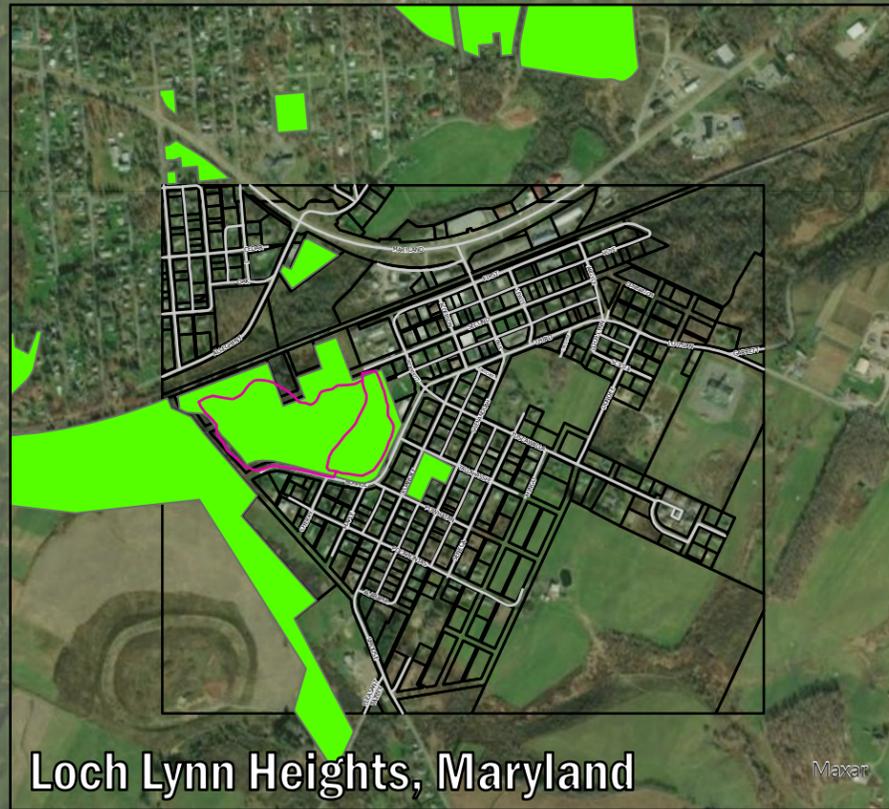
Schools: The Garrett County Board of Education is responsible for the public school system serving Loch Lynn Heights. The children from Loch Lynn Heights currently attend Yough Glades Elementary School from pre- kindergarten to fifth grade, Southern Middle School from sixth to eighth grade and Southern High School from ninth to twelfth grade. All three schools have adequate capacity for the current enrollment as well as additional capacity for growth if necessary. There are current plans to realign the schools by eliminating the Southern Middle School and including 7th and 8th grade with the Southern High School.

Library: Town residents have access to the Oakland branch of the Ruth Enlow library system. This branch of the library also serves the Towns of Oakland, Deer Park, Mountain Lake Park, and the nearby unincorporated parts of the County. The library has a 2017 Master Plan that will likely be updated in the next few years.

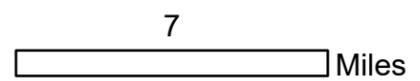


Loch Lynn Heights' walking trail is featured on the Garrett County's GC in Motion website, which is designed to increase opportunities for people to become more physically active by identifying healthy opportunities such as trail locations.

Parks & Recreation



-  **Garret County Parcels**
-  **Existing Trails**
-  **Park Lands Inventory**



Garrett County, Maryland

Date 9/15/2023

Source: Garrett County Planning Department

Health Services

The Garrett Regional Medical Center (GRMC) in Oakland is the closest significant health facility to Loch Lynn Heights and is an award winning, progressive, Joint Commission accredited acute care facility with 55 inpatient beds. The hospital serves a population of 46,000 within Garrett County and surrounding communities in Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Through its clinical affiliation with WVU Medicine, GRMC offers comprehensive health care services unique to a rural location. Patients receive specialty care, close to home for cardiopulmonary, heart and vascular, cancer care, infusion therapy, nephrology, orthopedics, and wound care, among others.

GRMC includes 55 inpatient beds, a 4-bed Intensive Care Unit, a 10-bed Subacute Rehabilitation Unit, Family Centered Maternity Suite, a 13-bed Outpatient Surgical Unit with a 4-bed Surgical Suite, and 24/7 Emergency Services. The Hospital's laboratory, radiology, and cardiopulmonary departments are full service ancillary units equipped with state of the art technology. GRMC also expanded health care services with the 2019 launch of the regional behavioral health clinic located in Oakland and establishment of the Grantsville Medical Center in 2017, offering primary, urgent and specialty care in northern Garrett County.



Magnolia Urgent & Primary Care opened in Loch Lynn Heights in 2022. The facility offers care for urgent medical and primary care patients within a relaxing and spiritual atmosphere. They believe in listening to the patient to achieve health and wellness goals. The facility has regular hours as well as appointments by phone.

Social Services

The Garrett County Department of Social Services, which has its main office in Oakland, administers a wide range of social service programs. These include child and adult protective services, foster care, adoption, purchase of child day care, services to the elderly, in home aid services, child support enforcement, public welfare grants, food stamps and medical assistance.

Solid Waste Management

Trash collection is handled by Sunrise Sanitation who hauls the material to the County landfill. Free limited sorted recycling facilities are available at various County refuse sites.

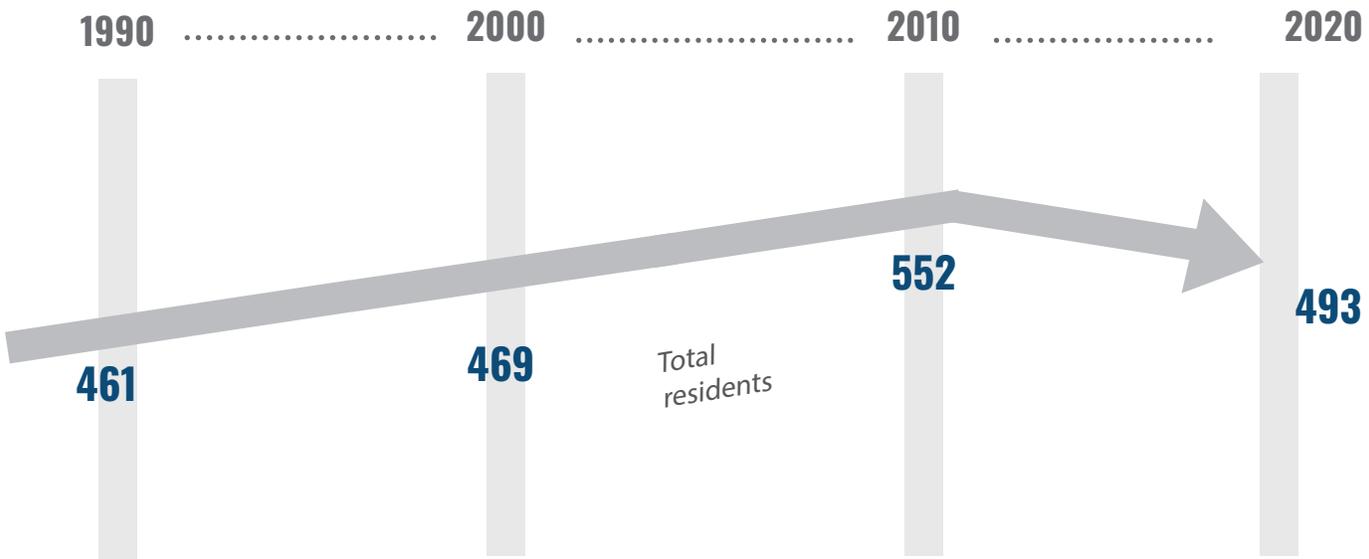


Demographics & Land Use

(Land Use, Housing, Development Regulations, Municipal Growth, Implementation and Development Capacity Analysis)

Loch Lynn Heights is situated in Garrett County, Maryland, two miles east of Oakland, via MD Route 135. Settlement patterns in Loch Lynn Heights have followed the trajectory of economic trends within the larger region. The Town declined as a resort during the early 1900's as the importance of the railroad for travel was surpassed by the rapidly growing popularity of automobile travel. Loch Lynn's 10.7% population decline since 2010 is the first in decades.

-  Population: 493
-  Land area: .32 sq.miles
-  Households: 187
-  Median household income: \$49,453



Note: all demographic data on pages 27-32 was derived from the U.S. Census Bureau

Race/Origin

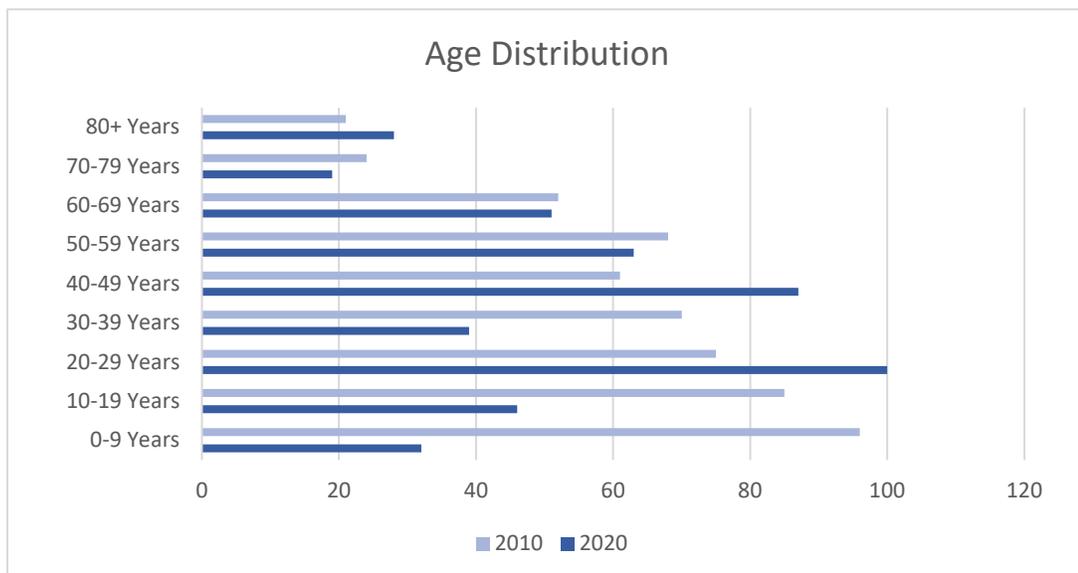


Population diversity is minimal in Loch Lynn Heights. The vast majority of residents are in the white alone category (97.2%).

Age

Within the overall context of an almost 11% population loss between 2010 and 2020, Loch Lynn Heights' age distribution has skewed more heavily toward younger to middle ages. This has resulted in a 25% increase of people in their 20s, while the number of older people (ages 40-69) and senior citizens (ages 70+) has remained fairly constant. The Town has also lost a large percentage of children ages 0-9 (-66.6%) and teens ages 10-19 (-45.8%).

The number of residents age 20 to 29 increased by **25%** since 2010.



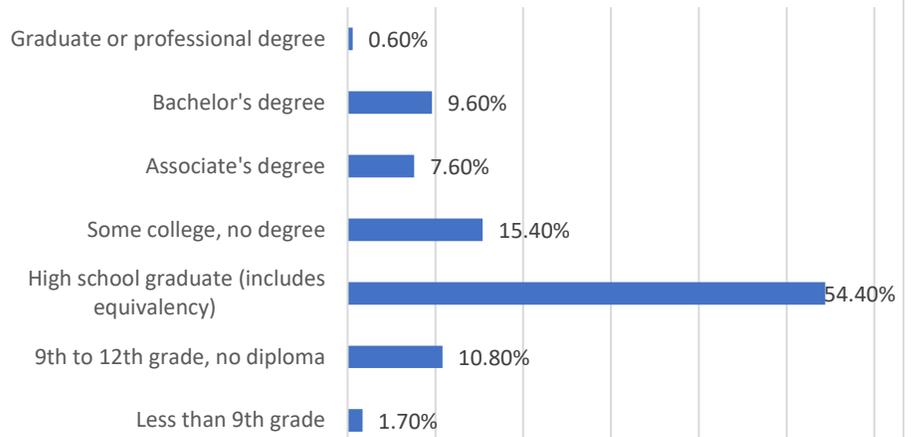
Education

The graphs to the right show the percentage differences between the educational attainment from 2010 to 2020.

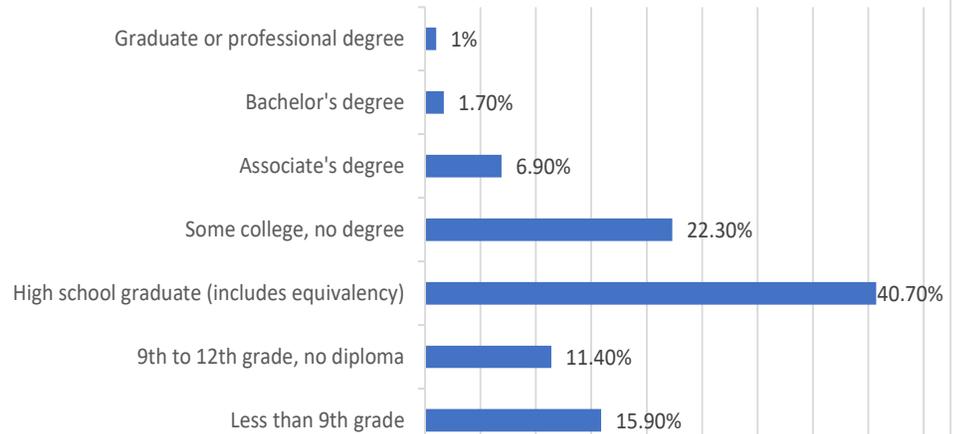
Some major changes over the last decade conclude that even though the population size is decreasing, a larger number of people over the age of 25 are getting more post-secondary education. High school diplomas are up approximately 14% since 2010 while people with less than a 9th grade education has dropped 14.2%.

In addition, the amount of people who have some college education and a Bachelors degree or higher have all increased over the last decade.

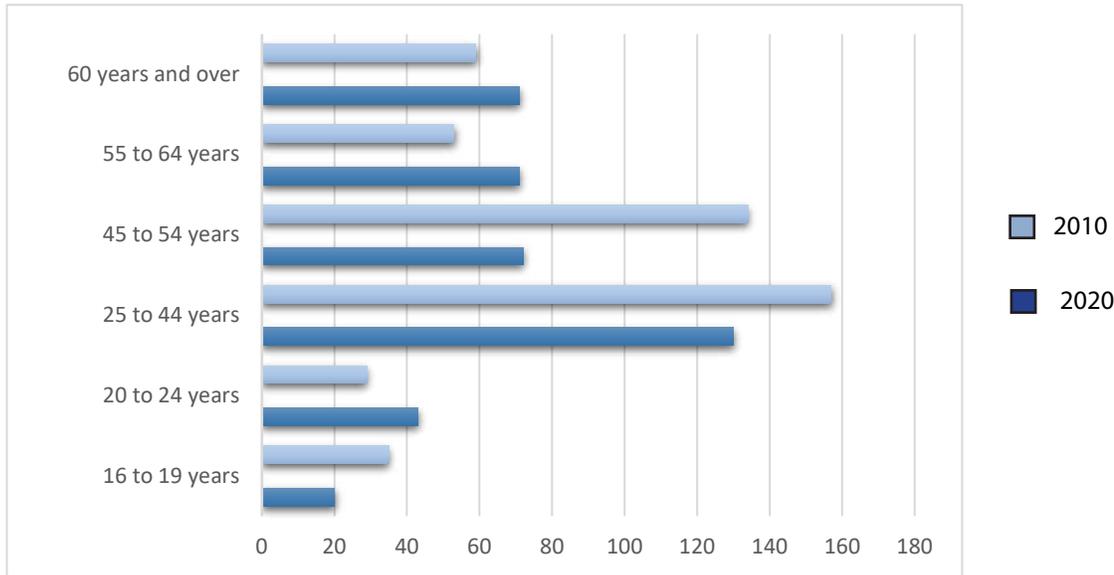
Population 25 years and older - 2020



Population 25 years and older-2010



Workforce



Loch Lynn Heights' workforce has changed significantly over the last decade as we see a large decrease in the number of middle aged workers (ages 45-54), which dropped by nearly 46%. While the older population of workers (ages 55 and over) have increased around 27% since 2010.

Employment

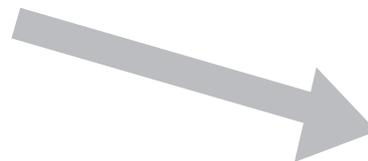
Unemployment rates have decreased from 12.8% in 2010 to 5.8% in the most recent 2020 estimates.

The labor participation rate has changed 10% over the last decade. Going from 65% in 2010 to 76% in 2020.

The labor force participation rate has changed

10% since 2010.

12.8%
2010 Unemployment rate



5.8%
2020 Unemployment rate

Income

In Loch Lynn Heights, household median incomes have increased significantly over the last ten years from \$25,234 to \$49,453. This increase could be caused by a number of factors including margin of error in completing the census forms as well as residents obtaining new, higher paying jobs and a considerable increase in the minimum wage.

Housing units

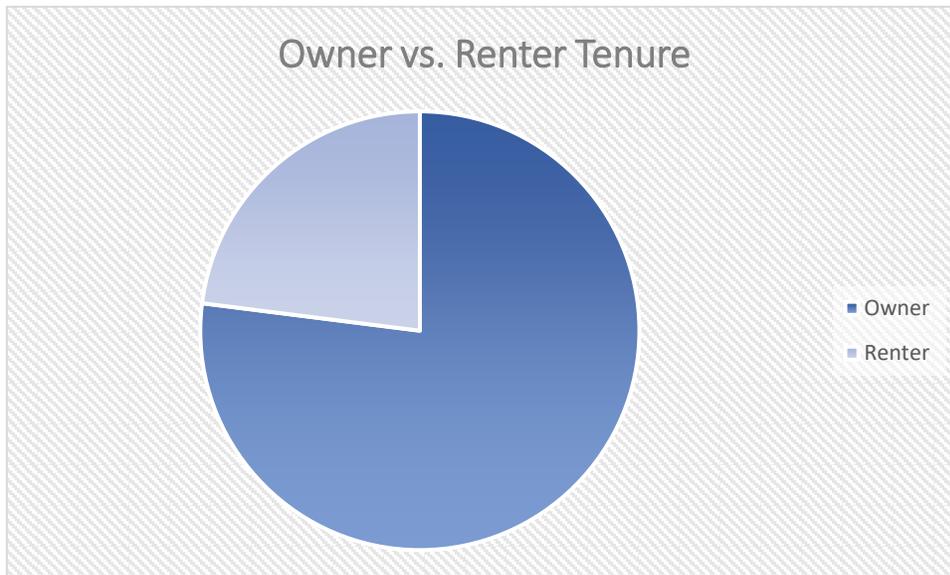
The Census Bureau counted 11 fewer total housing units in Loch Lynn Heights in 2020 compared to 2010, a change that could be due to abandonment/demolition, conversion or other factors.

As the graph below illustrates, the occupancy status of Loch Lynn Heights is approximately 77% owned while the amount of people renting is 23%.



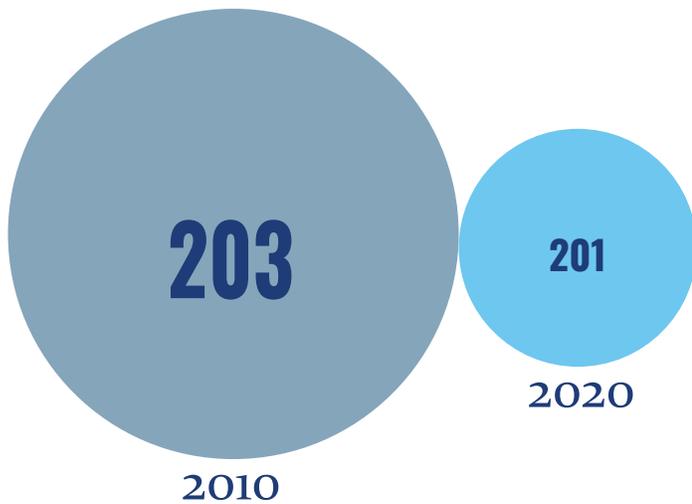
Loch Lynn Heights' total number of housing units is **217**

Note: housing data was derived from the Town of Loch Lynn



Households

The Census Bureau estimated that there was a total of 203 households in 2010 which has decreased to 201 in 2020. The decrease in the number of households parallels the loss of population. One trend that has remained stagnant over the last decade though, is the average family size which remains around 3.

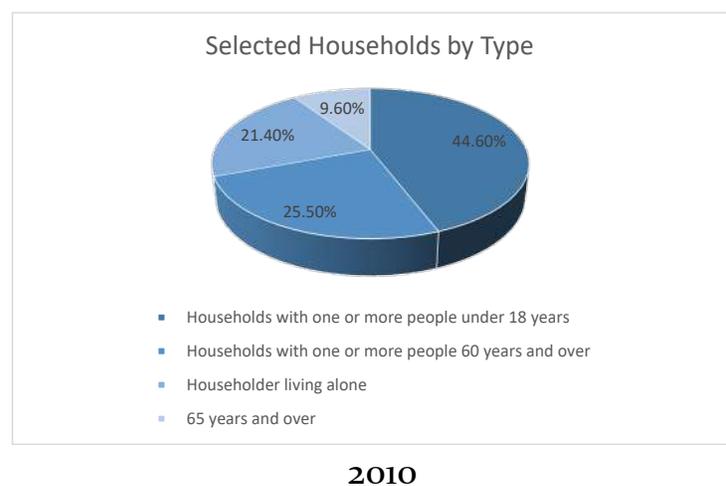
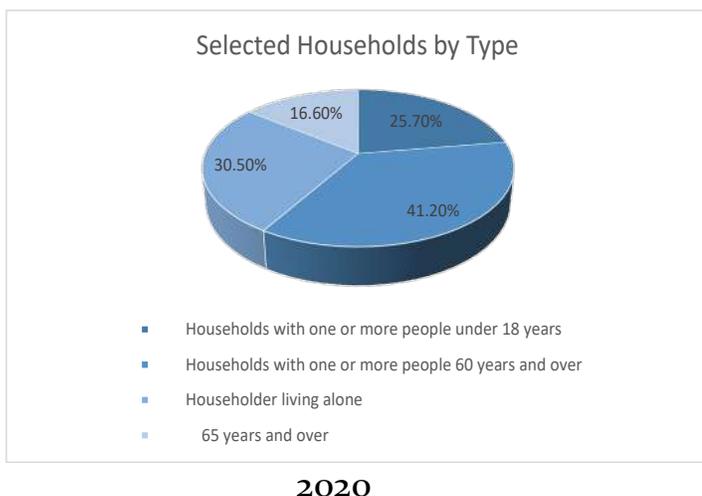


Loch Lynn Heights' average family size is approximately 3

Note: housing data was derived from the town of Loch Lynn

Housing type

Housing type in Loch Lynn Heights has changed quite a lot over the last decade. As the graphs show below, over the last ten years, households with children under 18 has dropped by 18.8%, while the population of households with one or more people 60 and over has risen by 15.7%. Living alone has also increased 9.1% over the last decade as well.





Health Statistics

The information below was gathered by the Maryland Department of Health for the Comprehensive Plan.

Death Rates

Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates	Garrett County	Maryland
Total mortality	771.6	711.8
Ischemic heart disease mortality	148.6	92.1
Cancer mortality	140.0	151.3
Stroke mortality	37.1	40.0
Chronic lower respiratory disease mortality	38.9	30.3
Diabetes mortality	28.9	19.7

Red Text: higher than state rate

Source: Maryland Chronic Disease Burden Tables, CDC Wonder Underlying Cause of Death 2015-2019

Morbidity

Health Outcomes: Adults Aged 18 & older	Loch Lynn Heights	Garrett County	Maryland
Obesity	35.9%	34.2%	32.2%
High Blood Pressure	34.7%	35.4%	34.5%
High Cholesterol (among adults screened in last 5 years)	32.8%	34.6%	34.9%
Diabetes	10.4%	10.3%	11.1%
Asthma	10.4%	9.2%	14.6%

Source: Maryland Chronic Disease Burden Tables, BRFSS 2019 (Maryland)
CDC Places, 2019 (Loch Lynn Heights & Garrett County)

Health Prevention, Risk Behaviors & Status

Adults Aged 18 & Older	Loch Lynn Heights	Garrett County
Lack health insurance (18-64)	35.9%	34.2%
No leisure time physical activity	34.7%	35.4%
Mental health not good for 14+ of last 30 days	32.8%	34.6%
Physical health not good for 14+ of last 30 days	10.4%	10.3%

Source: CDC Places, 2019

Existing Land Use

Loch Lynn Heights is primarily a residential community as can be seen on the Existing Land Use Map on the following page. According to the US Census, the Town contains approximately 143 single family dwellings, approximately 10 mobile home units and 20 multi-family (apartment) structures. Most of the commercial establishments are located along First and Second Avenues in the northwest portion of Town. These commercial facilities include warehouses, a former restaurant, automobile service station, automobile repair shop, self storage buildings, transport and storage business, and variety/thrift shops.

Semi public/public facilities as well as park & recreation in Loch Lynn Heights include a playground/pavilion, an athletic complex with walking trail and the Town Hall/Maintenance Building. The latter provides ample space for the Town's office, meeting room and maintenance garage. Agricultural areas are located on the eastern portion of the Town.

A breakdown of land uses by percentage is below:

- Commercial: 6.6%
- Park & Recreation: 17.3%
- Public/Semi Public: 1.0%
- Vacant: 16.1%
- Multi-family Residential: 3.1%
- Single-family Residential: 43.0%
- Agriculture: 12.9%

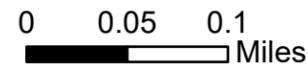
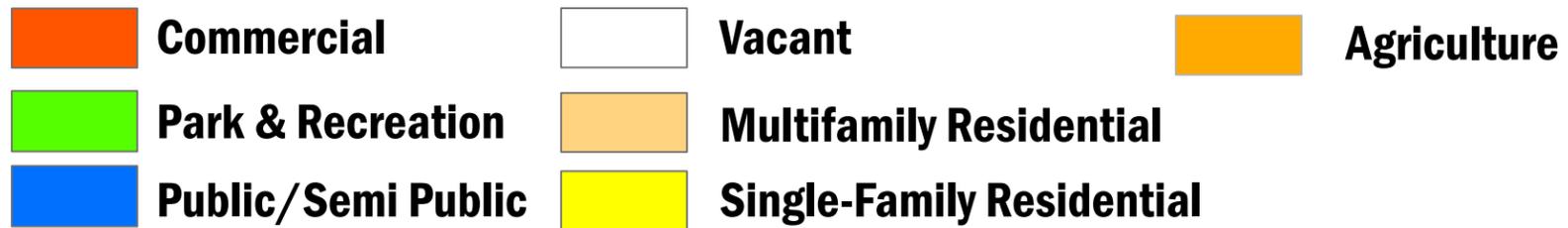
Zoning

The Town's existing zoning map is comprised of three districts as depicted on the Zoning Map on the following pages:

- Town Residential: The majority of the Town's land is in this district.
- Employment Center: Primarily located at the Mustang Property and adjacent vacant land at the end of First Avenue and to the east of Wyandott Street.
- Town Center: Primarily located along Second and First Avenues, to the east of Lewis Street and to the west of Wyandott Street and along Third Avenue between Alderson and Lewis Streets.

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Existing Land Use

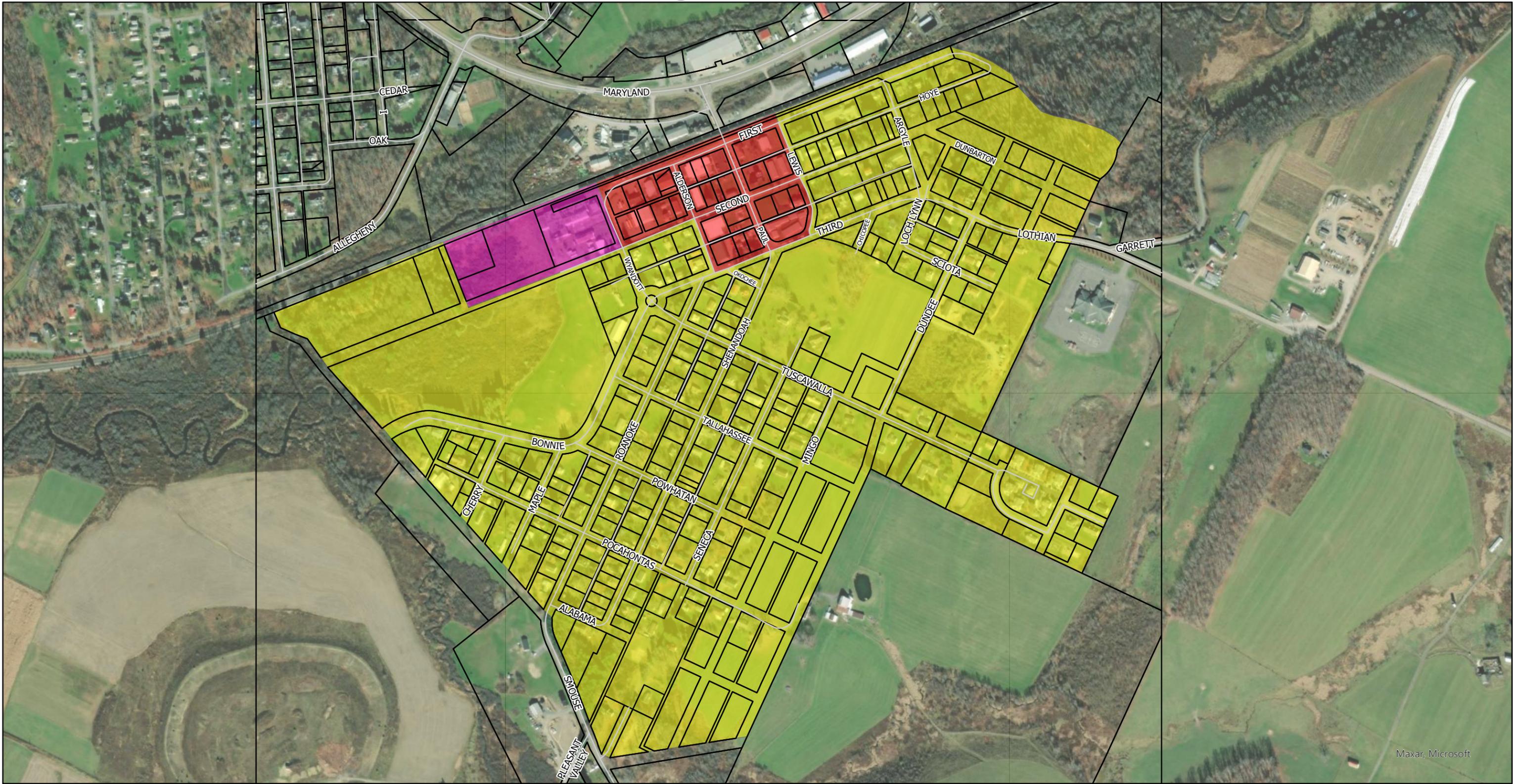


Loch Lynn Heights, Maryland

Date 10/11/2022

Source: Garrett County Planning Department

Zoning Districts



Maxar, Microsoft

Loch Lynn Heights, Maryland

Date 3/3/2023

Source: Garrett County Planning Department

Employment Center

Town Center

Town Residential

0 0.05 0.1 Miles



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Chapter 3: Action Plan

This section of the plan outlines recommendations that the Town can implement to address issues identified during the planning process.





Natural Resources

(Mineral Resources/Areas of Critical State Concern/Sensitive Areas)

Work with the State to encourage tree planting and maintenance

The streets of Loch Lynn Heights are lined with many large species of trees - mainly oak and maple varieties. Quite a few of these older trees have been weakened by vigorous trimming around utility lines. The town has also planted many smaller types of trees along rights-of-way, including crab apple and service berry. A new tree is planted annually at the town's Arbor Day celebration. Loch Lynn Heights has been the recipient of the Maryland Forest Service's Tree City designation for the past 15 years and has been awarded the Arbor Day Foundation's PLANT Award for 20 years, in recognition of the town's commitment to maintaining healthy trees in the community.

The Forest Service through the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) assists with restoring, managing and protecting trees and forests. There is currently an initiative to plant 5 million trees throughout Maryland by 2031. The Town should continue to work with the Forest Service to plant additional trees in Loch Lynn Heights as well as maintain the trees that exist. DNR, which issues permits for pruning or removal of trees, completed a tree inventory for Loch Lynn Heights in 2003. Along with the map of the trees in town, Loch Lynn Heights should work with DNR to update the inventory. If possible the inventory should be updated annually to identify areas in need of trees as well as address or remove trees that are dead or dying.

Address flooding along the Loch Lynn Town Trail

The existing Trail located behind the Town Hall, which is a popular destination and widely used by residents and visitors, experiences flooding throughout the year from the Little Youghiogeny River. This presents issues with use of the trail as well as cost of clean up for the Town.

Garrett Trails has been assisting with sand bagging and keeping debris out of the water. More robust improvements to the trail to reduce serious flooding, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, may be needed. The Town should continue coordinating with Garrett Trails to address these issues and identify improvements for the future.

Promote Water-Wise program to residents

The Water-Wise conservation landscape certification program is offered by the University of Maryland Extension. The program allows property owners to be recognized for utilizing best practices for lawns and gardens. Property owners can complete an application that utilizes criteria to determine how many "inches" they can obtain by utilizing various best practices. Once a property owner reaches a yard or 36 inches, they receive a sign for their yard.

The Town can help promote this program to residents in order to assist with reducing pesticide use, improving water quality, providing wildlife habitats, promoting stormwater best management practices, and much more.



Transportation

Continue to monitor the status of wind mills being hauled through Town.

Beginning in March of 2023, a number of wind mills have been hauled through Loch Lynn Heights on their way to the mountain/hillside outside of Oakland near Route 560. Due to the size of these wind mills and their components, large trucks are necessary for the movement of the wind mills. This has the potential to cause damage to local roads. While there is a road agreement in place, the Town should stay in contact with Exelon Generation, the contractor, to ensure there are adequate resources to address potential damage to streets and rail crossings.

Pave the gravel portion of east end of 1st Avenue.

Loch Lynn Heights maintains most of the streets throughout Town. Most of these are paved and in good condition. There are a few streets, however that remain gravel. Argyle Street is a priority for paving.

Support efforts to alleviate or remove truck traffic from MD 560.

Vehicles, particularly large trucks, often travel at a high rate of speed on MD 560 causing safety issues through town as they travel towards MD 135. In addition, the local roads cannot support this heavy traffic.

There are several options the Town can take or support to help with this issue:

- Adopt a Town policy to install "speed feedback" signs on MD 560 as it goes through town. These signs alert drivers to their speed and flash once they are over the speed limit. A permit would be needed from the State Highway Association before installation.
- Initiate a traffic study to determine additional methods to address this issue. Some items may include potentially prohibiting truck traffic on Bonnie Boulevard and/or analyze the intersection approach from MD 560 at E Third Avenue to potentially change direction of streets to one-way. This could help to deter through traffic.

- Support the Oakland Bypass Project - This project, which is included as a top priority in the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan, will make US 219 the primary North South Freight Corridor for the area. It is designed to alleviate truck traffic on MD 560. According to the County plan, design is underway, but no funding for construction has been allocated.

Encourage the development of a walk/bike route from Loch Lynn Heights to Oakland.

Every year the Maryland Department of Transportation solicits priority letters from counties regarding a limited number of priority projects in order to match with limited funds available. As mentioned above, the Oakland Bypass project is one of Garrett Counties top priorities, but there are a number of other priorities listed in the plan as well. One of these other priorities includes the MD 135 Road Diet and Complete Streets Design from Loch Lynn Heights to Oakland. This project includes planning to improve safety and to better accommodate motorized and non-motorized users along a 1.5 mile section of MD 135 from the intersection of Gorman Road (Lothian Street) in Loch Lynn Heights to Third Street in Oakland. Traffic along this stretch of road often exceeds the 40 MPH limit. The goal of planning is to provide a concept plan to:

- Reuse the right-of-way.
- Create a two-way, left-turn lane(s).
- Provide dedicated space for bicyclists and pedestrians to access destinations such as schools, neighborhoods and parks.

The County, with support from the Town, did apply for a Bikeways Grant in the Spring of 2023 for this project.



Community Facilities

(Community Facilities & Services and Water Resources)

Continue to work with Garrett County to plan and implement projects listed in the County's Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) as well as the projects funded through Program Open Space.

The Garrett County LPPRP identifies funding for priority recreation projects in the County's municipalities over the next ten years. The Town should continue to work with the County to ensure their priority projects are on the list for funding.

Loch Lynn Heights has a number of projects programmed on the most recent LPPRP including:

- Lighting Fields Phase II (2023)
- Modernize Play Equipment (2025)
- Maintain Boardwalk (2026, 2030 and 2034)
- Community Building/Center (2032)

Loch Lynn Heights projects recently funded or are being funded through Program Open Space include:

- New restroom and storage room
- Railing and drainage upgrades to improve safety at the pavilion
- Retaining wall and small planter bed at the playground
- Security cameras at athletic complex
- Educational signage at wetlands boardwalk
- Protective bollards for lighting at athletic complex
- Wetland trail interpretive signs at athletic complex/boardwalk trail
- Lighting for 3 soccer fields

Redevelop the Town Park according to community needs.

Currently the Town stores equipment, tables, chairs, etc. for the park at Town Hall. There is a need for a small storage building at the park to reduce the amount of time and resources needed to move these items back and forth. As of the development of this plan, the new restroom is almost complete and includes storage space.

In addition, the playground equipment is over 20 years old and needs to be replaced. As discussed in previous recommendation, replacing the playground equipment is listed in the County LPPRP. The Town should gather public input from residents to determine what activities and equipment would be most beneficial if the space were to be reutilized.

Develop a Community Center.

When the former school house was torn down, there was discussion to build a community center. The Town should investigate to see if there is community support to build a new community center at the site of the former school. This could potentially be combined with a new Town Hall on the site. The cost of this project would be significant, so the Town should continue to work with Garrett County to keep this project on the LPPRP and research additional grant opportunities from state and local agencies.

Continue to work with the appropriate entities to publicize Loch Lynn Heights' recreational amenities.

The Garrett County Department of Health has developed an initiative, Garrett County in Motion, to promote health and active lifestyles for its residents and visitors. This initiative includes a website that highlights events and facilities within Garrett County related to health and wellness. The Loch Lynn Town Trail is featured on the website and includes a map and pictures as well as information about the trail including parking, type of trail, cell service availability, etc. The Towns should continue to work with the Health Department, Garrett Trails and Garrett County Chamber of Commerce to publicize the Town's recreational assets.

Additional partners include: The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Small Town Trails and Garrett County Business Development.

Work with electric provider to update streetlights.

The streetlights throughout the Town are older and frequently go out and are not fixed in a timely fashion. This is a safety as well as aesthetic issue for Loch Lynn Heights. The Town should contact Potomac Edison, the electric provider, to determine a plan for addressing streetlights as they need repair as well as to replace outdated fixtures with LED lights.

Work with Garrett County and local internet providers to improve broadband capacity within the Town.

Garrett County is working on a broadband initiative with the goal of connecting all citizens and businesses throughout the County. According to their website, currently there are approximately 6,000 addresses lacking high speed internet. The County is in the process of completing a study to address the areas of need and determine what efforts would be appropriate to meet the need. The Affordable Connectivity Program, a U.S. government program, is also available to assist low-income households pay for internet service.

Shentel is the main internet supplier in Town, but there are a few other providers for a small number of households such as NeuBeam and Amazon. There are currently plans to build fiber service in Loch Lynn Heights, but there are competing providers so this could take several years to happen. The Town should continue to work with the County and local providers to upgrade and expand service for residents, businesses and in public areas such as the park and trail.

Support the upgrading of sewer infrastructure throughout Town while keeping costs to residents at a minimum.

There have been recent upgrades to the sewage system serving Loch Lynn Heights. In order to offset increases in utility bills for local residents, the Town utilized American Recovery Act funds to help offset any increases.

In addition, there is a need to upgrade the sewer line in Alley #3, between Seneca and Shenandoah Avenues. The current situation could lead to large back ups if there is ever a problem. The cost of this project is fairly large, but there is funding through the USDA and CDBG.

Support the upgrading of the water system throughout Town.

According to Town officials, one of the most serious infrastructure needs at this time is the water system. Many of the existing lines are very old and experience serious leaks on a regular basis. In addition, there are parts of Town that have very poor water pressure. Town officials should contact the Garrett County Department of Public Works to discuss the status of a plan, developed several years ago, to replace the water main lines throughout Loch Lynn Heights.



Land use

(Land Use, Development Regulations, Municipal Growth, Implementation and Development Capacity Analysis)

Encourage redevelopment of the Mustang Property.

The Mustang Property is a former moving/storage company that has been abandoned for many years. While the property needs extensive work to be able to be utilized, it sits in a prime location at the entrance to the Town and has multiple redevelopment opportunities.

Garrett County Planning and Land Management is in the process of working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which funds West Virginia University's Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program to develop a brownfield inventory. TAB provides technical assistance to communities and other stakeholders to help address brownfield sites and increase involvement in brownfields cleanup, revitalization and reuse. While the Mustang property will not be in the initial round, there is an opportunity to include it in the future. Loch Lynn Heights should continue to coordinate with the County regarding the inventory and keep in contact with the property owner so that any future redevelopment opportunities can be discussed.

Encourage an appropriate re-use of the former restaurant in Town

Loch Lynn Restaurant, a long standing business recently closed. The property is situated in a prime location at the entrance to Town and would be ideal for a new restaurant, convenience store or other locally serving commercial business.

If possible, the Town should contact the owner to determine if any development plans are underway and discuss potential reuses that would benefit the owner and the Town. In addition, ensure that the Town's Zoning Ordinance allows the desirable uses by right.

Review the Town's zoning ordinance.

The Loch Lynn Heights Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1997 and was last updated in 2014. The Garrett County Planning and Zoning Office acts as Zoning Administrator for the town, reviewing and approving permits and assisting with Zoning issues. There

are currently three zoning districts, which include: Town Residential (TR), Town Center (TC) and Employment Center (EC). The majority of the Town is zoned Town Residential with the Town Center and Employment Center Districts being located at the northern end of Town near the entrance from Maryland Highway 135.

Due to the vacant Mustang property and the Town's only restaurant recently closing, the TC and EC Districts should be reviewed to ensure that the appropriate uses are permitted by right and do not have to go through extra regulations through a special exception use.

The TR District should also be reviewed to determine if accessory dwellings should be allowed. These types of uses provide opportunities for people to provide housing for aging relatives, for young people just starting out or caretaker housing.

In addition, the Zoning Ordinance should be regularly reviewed as a whole to ensure that the regulations fit with the goals and development patterns of the Town.

Review land use map annually to determine future annexation opportunities.

In the previous plan, the 158 acre tract adjoining the western Town boundary was identified as a potential annexation opportunity, but only for natural area preservation. This land has since been annexed by Mountain Lake Park and is no longer a viable option.

Through this planning process it was noted that annexation options for the Town are currently limited due to physical and political constraints. A few options were identified as potential future annexation areas. These include the 100-acre Mattingly Farm, which currently has 12 acres in Loch Lynn Heights and Pleasant Valley Road area, which has utilities. Future uses for these areas could be for residential development. However, the owners of the farm do not currently plan to change the land's use.

The Town should review the land use map on an annual basis to determine if any opportunities for annexation arise due to changes in conditions.



Housing

Ensure that there are no barriers to affordable and fair housing in Loch Lynn Heights.

In 2023 Maryland instituted HB90, which requires a housing element, to promote fair and affordable housing, to be included in Comprehensive Plans developed for municipalities and non-charter counties. This requires that Comprehensive Plans contain a housing element to address “affordable” and “low-income housing,” where affordability is measured in relation to the Area Median Income (AMI). AMI is a measure set by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Furthering fair housing in HB90 is defined as taking meaningful actions to:

- *Overcome patterns of segregation*
- *Foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to housing and opportunity based on protected characteristics*
- *Address significant disparities in housing needs and access to opportunity*
- *Replace segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns*
- *Foster and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws*

(source: planning.maryland.gov)

A “housing cost burden” standard, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is the most frequently used measure of housing affordability in the United States. According to the standard, households that are cost-burdened pay 30% or more of their gross income for housing expenses (such as rent, mortgage, utilities, condominium and HOA fees, and taxes). The following findings developed for Loch Lynn Heights are drawn from the Maryland Department of Planning’s Housing Data Dashboard.

2022 AMI for Loch Lynn Heights:		\$52,500
Household Income Levels/Ranges		
Workforce Ownership Range (60% - 120% AMI):		\$31,500 - \$63,000
Workforce Rental Range (50% - 120% AMI):		\$26,250 - \$63,000
Low Income (<60% AMI):		\$31,500
Affordable Homeowner/Rental Monthly Payments (based on 30% of Household Income)		
Workforce Ownership Range (60%-120% AMI):		\$762 - \$1,523
Workforce Rental Range (50%-100% AMI):		\$634 - \$1,269
Low Income Threshold:		\$762

According to Local Housing Solutions, an online resource that uses nationally available data to document local housing needs, 75.3% of households in the Town owned their home, which is higher than Maryland (67.3%) and the US (64.6%). The number of owner households that were moderately or severely cost burdened decreased from 18.6% in 2016 to 13.7% in 2021. This rate is also lower than Maryland (22.4%) and the US (21.8%). Rental households that are cost burdened also decreased from 47.1% in 2016 to 39.5% in 2021. These numbers were also lower than Maryland (47.5%) and the US (46.0%). This data is showing that homeowners and renters in Loch Lynn Heights are fairly stable. The Town will want to ensure that current and future residents continue to have access to affordable housing.

Continue to support Garrett County Community Action' Committee's (GCCAC) work and projects in Loch Lynn Heights.

GCCAC, one of Maryland's 19 Community Action Agencies, administers support programs and services in several areas including: Asset Development, Child and Family Development, Community Economic Development , Senior Services and Transportation. GCCAC currently owns a single family home and a small apartment complex with eight units in Loch Lynn Heights. In 2021, the inventory of federally subsidized rental housing in Loch Lynn Heights included 24 units and comprised 55.8% of Loch Lynn Heights's total rental stock. It is important the Town continue to work with agencies such as Community Action to ensure that Fair Housing needs are met for the Town's current and future residents.

Adhere to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment guidelines & their priority action items.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development commissioned the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment & 10-year Strategic Plan to address issues related to housing affordability in the state. The document focused on the following guiding principles:

- Promote Equity in Housing;
- Create a Balanced Housing Supply;
- Increase Access to Opportunity;
- Support Economic Growth;
- Create Context-Specific Approaches

The priority needs and actions were prepared at a regional level so Loch Lynn Heights should rely on the report as a guiding document and utilize it as a resource when needed. The following table highlights priority action items serving homeowners in the Western Maryland region (which includes Garrett County) :

Priority Action Items for Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett and Washington Counties)
<i>Actions serving homeowners</i>
Expand homebuyer assistance and education
Update standards in the Maryland Mortgage Program
Restart local homeownership programs
<i>Actions serving renters</i>
Align federal funds and policies in non-entitlement communities with local needs
Increase state-level support for transitional housing
<i>Issues of Regional importance</i>
Tailored approaches for rural communities
Homes for seniors
Capacity-building for nonprofit developers
More flexible state-level environmental regulations

Encourage housing options that allow people to age in place.

As the residents of Loch Lynn Heights age, housing needs change in terms of accessibility, size of house, amenities, etc. Currently there is a lack of this type of housing for seniors. The Town should encourage different types of housing stock to address this unmet need. The town should work with housing organizations to identify opportunities for senior housing and ensure ordinances are not exclusionary in terms of allowing different types of housing options.

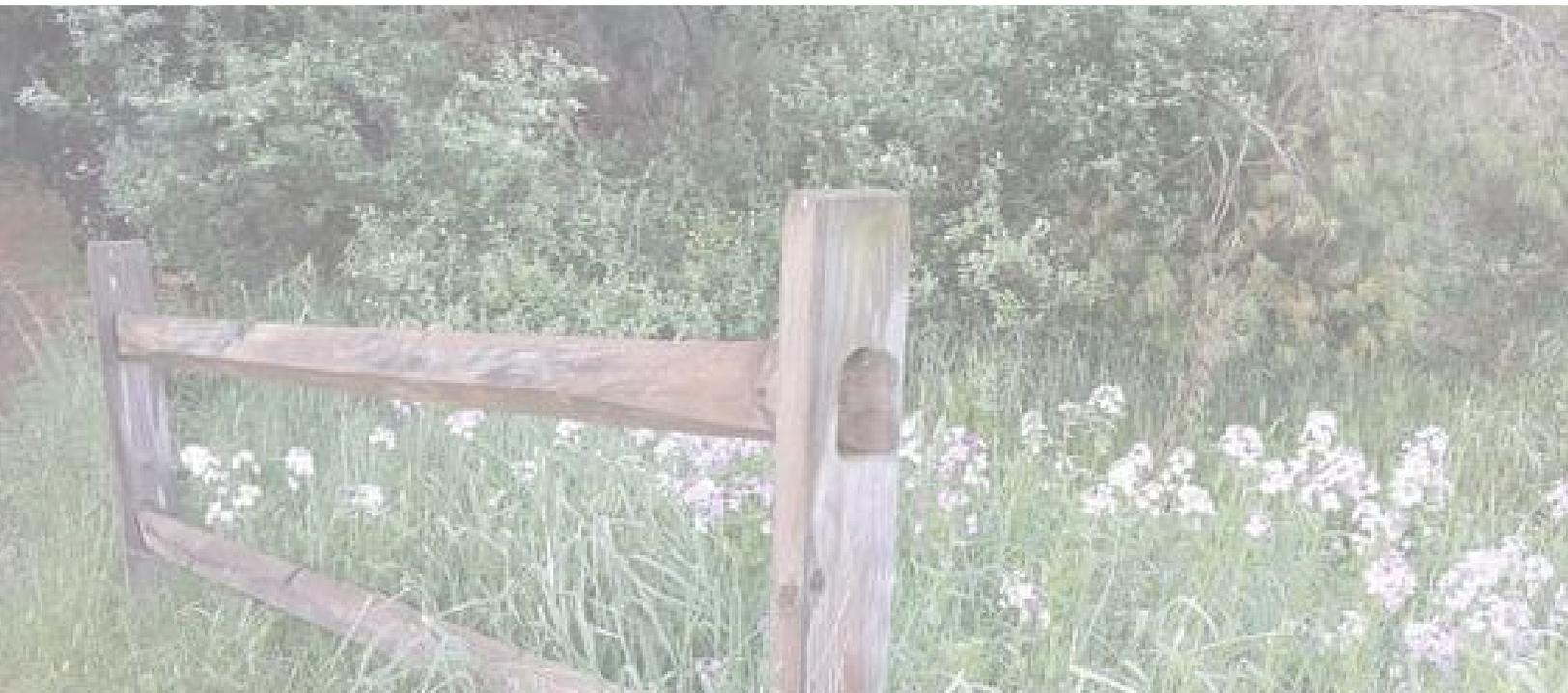
Encourage collaboration with Garrett County Housing initiatives.

There are many organizations doing great work and promoting housing affordability within the County and region. Loch Lynn Heights should continue to support and consult with these groups, when necessary, to ensure opportunities exist within the Town for all who wish to live there.

- Garrett County Community Action Committee, as mentioned earlier
- The Garrett Workforce Housing Alliance is a non-profit aimed at finding a solution to the workforce housing issue. Affordable workforce housing is becoming an issue in the County due to an increase in new residents, growing tourism and an expanding vacation rental market. The Alliance is working to tackle this issue by refurbishing run-down homes into affordable, quality long term rentals and for sale homes, and bringing stakeholders together to work together in solving this issue.
- The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's home ownership and rental housing programs help families in Maryland find, maintain and keep affordable housing in communities throughout the state.
- The USDA Rural Development's Rural Housing Service offers assistance to first-time low-income homebuyers through various loan programs.

Chapter 4: Implementation

This section outlines next steps for plan implementation and provides a matrix of all recommendations with associated information.





Overall Implementation

What comes next?

The Comprehensive Plan will require continued commitment from the Town. The following is a list of steps that should be taken to ensure successful implementation.

- Assign the Planning Commission to oversee the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The commission would not be responsible for directly carrying out actions, but would initiate tasks and coordinate with agencies, volunteers, Town staff, local organizations and/or other groups to help carry them out.
- Submit priority implementation projects as part of the City budget discussions. If projects require municipal approval and/or funding, ensure that they are presented to Council with plenty of time for deliberation.
- Annually evaluate implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, documenting actions taken during the past year to help achieve the vision, address community development objectives and make recommendations to City Council of modifications to the Comprehensive Plan. Append the annual update to the Plan document to create an ongoing record of progress.
- Support the Garrett County annual priority letter that addresses transportation issues, particularly MD 560 and MD 135.

Implementation Matrix

Bringing it all together

The Implementation Matrix on the following pages, outlines all the priority recommendations with the supporting information for each. This is to allow easy access to all the recommendations in one place.

Recommendation	Timeframe	Potential Partner Organizations	Cost	Funding Sources	Page
<i>Natural Resources</i>					
Work with the State to encourage tree planing and maintenance	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service	N/A	N/A	43
Address flooding along the Loch Lynn Trail	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett Trails	Dependent on project	Garrett County	43
Promote the Water-Wise program to residents	Short Term (1-3 years)	University of Maryland Extension	N/A	N/A	44
<i>Transportation</i>					
Continue to monitor status of wind mills being hauled through Town	Short Term (1-3 years)	Exelon Generation	N/A	N/A	45
Pave the gravel portion of Argyle Street	Short Term (1-3 years)	N/A	\$10-\$20 per square yard	American Rescue Plan Act Funds	45
Support efforts to alleviate or remove truck traffic from MD 560	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett County; MDOT	N/A	N/A	45
Encourage the development of a walk/bike route from Loch Lynn Heights to Oakland	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett Couty; MDOT	N/A	N/A	46
<i>Community Facilities</i>					
Support projects listed in the Garrett County Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)	See LPPRP for detail	Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management	Dependent on project (see LPPRP for detail)	Garrett County Program Open Space	47
Redevelop the Town Park	Short Term (1-3 years)	Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management	Dependent on project	Garrett County Program Open Space	47
Develop a Community Center	Long Term (5+ years)	Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management	Dependent on scope and size of building, but approximately \$1,000,000	Garrett County Program Open Space	48
Publicize Loch Lynn Heights' recreational amenities	Short Term (1-3 years)	Garrett County Department of Health; Garrett County Chamber of Commerce; Small Town Trails; Garrett County Business Development	N/A	N/A	48
Work with electric provider to update streetlights	Short Term (1-3 years)	Potomac Edison	N/A	N/A	48
Improve broadband capacity in Town	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett County; Internet providers	Dependent on project	American Rescue Plan Act Funds	48
Support the upgrading of sewer infrastructure throughout Town	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett County	Dependent on project	American Rescue Plan Act Funds; Maryland Dpartment of the Environment	49
Support the upgrading of the water system throughout Town	Medium Term (3-5 years)	Garrett County	Dependent on project	American Rescue Plan Act Funds; Maryland Dpartment of the Environment	49

Recommendation	Timeframe	Potential Partner Organizations	Cost	Funding Sources	Page
Land Use					
Encourage redevelopment of the Mustang property	Long Term (5+ years)	Garret County Department of Planning and Land Management	Project costs included in grant application	DCNR; DCED; ARC; EDA; USDA	50
Encourage an appropriate re-use of former restaurant	Short Term (1-3 years)	Property Owner; Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management	N/A	N/A	50
Review the Loch Lynn Heights Zoning Ordinance	Short Term (1-3 years)	Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Management	N/A	N/A	50
Review land use map annually to identify future annexation opportunities	Short Term (1-3 years)	Property Owners	N/A	N/A	51
Housing					
Ensure that there are no barriers to affordable and fair housing in Loch Lynn Heights	Ongoing	State of Maryland Department of Planning	N/A	N/A	52
Continue to support Garrett County's Community Action Committee's (GCCAC) work and projects in Loch Lynn Heights	Ongoing	GCCAC	N/A	N/A	53
Adhere to the Maryland Housing Needs Assessment Guidelines and their priority action items	Ongoing	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development	N/A	N/A	54
Encourage housing options that allow people to age in place	Ongoing	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development; GCCAC	N/A	N/A	55
Encourage collaboration with Garrett County Housing Initiatives	Ongoing	GCCAC; Garrett County Workforce Housing Alliance; Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development; USDA Rural Development	N/A	N/A	55